

# A Four-fold Word for Trees

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Belleville Elm

NEWARK SHADE TREE COMMISSION

1908

870



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## A Four-fold Word for Trees

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In this day of æsthetic awakening, much is being done to bring about the "City Beautiful." The important cities are all in the procession. Park and Art Commissions, Architects' and Artists' Societies vie with each other in efforts to achieve civic development. It is encouraging to the planter of trees to note that all such organizations declare trees to be indispensable elements in the construction of the city beautiful.

Trees  
indispensable

Trees supply a two-fold beauty. Beauty of form and beauty of color. Graceful in outline and decked in Nature's green, they have a double attraction. Whether singly, or in mass, there is nothing in a city's streets so charming as bright green trees.

The French hold the "Grand Prix" as the creators of the most beautiful city—Paris. It is declared that the trees of Paris with their stately, growing columns, their overarching, living, moving, rustling canopies of green are more potent elements of the city's beauty than the Grecian pillars of the Madeleine, or the marble facades of the "Hotel de Ville." But we have a conspicuous example of civic art in our own country, viz: Washington, the Nation's capitol. Here again, trees are a prominent feature. Their background of green enhances the beauty of every statue, and frames every great building. The lines of well-planted, well-kept

Paris

Washington



Norway Maple, Poinier Street

trees wind co-extensive with the boulevards and by their variety and beauty elicit the admiration of all beholders.

Newark

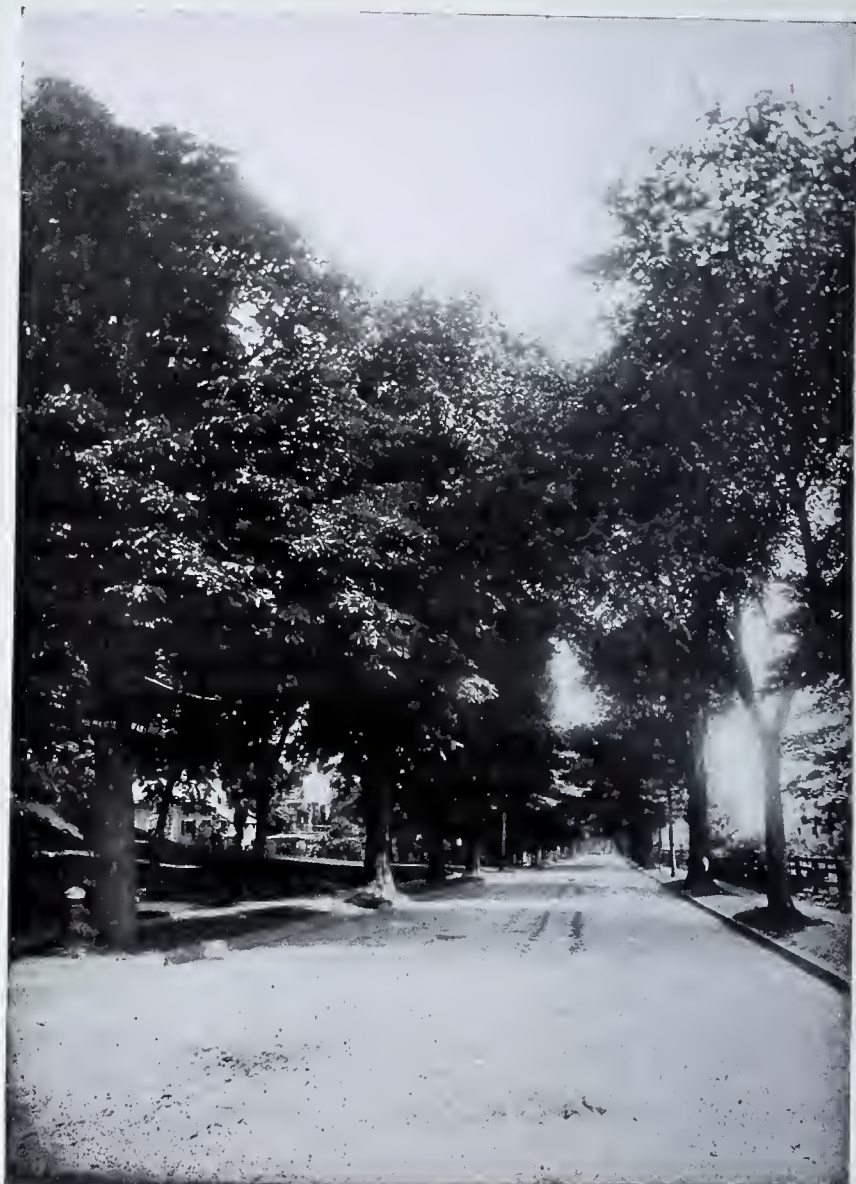
Civic patriotism and the desire to excel are already at work bringing about in Newark the city beautiful. These

sentiments have been finding expression, for instance, in splendid municipal and business edifices. All right-minded men recognize the importance of beautiful public and private buildings. Yet all will agree, we think, that the touch of nature too is needed and is even more important. Indeed, it is the universal judgment that the attractiveness of a city depends largely on the trees planted along its streets. Whether one regards the graceful outlines of the leafless trunks and limbs, the tiny bud hastening its preparation for Spring, the feathery foliage as Spring bursts out anew, the glory of Summer, or the splendor of autumnal colors when every leaf becomes a flower, the tree stands forth a miracle of beauty and of power. If one healthy tree is a source of pleasure to the observant, long rows of well-kept trees with their graceful arches and nodding plumes, their grateful shade and flecks of sunshine, command attention from the most careless. They add more, we believe, to the beauty of a street than elaborate architecture—giving a loveliness and grace otherwise unattainable. Thus the street of the poor man may rival that of the rich.

Always  
Beautiful

Trees, because of their beauty, perpetually yield pure pleasure to the people; and this more and more as the people awake to them. Whatever thus adds to the stock of human joys has a real usefulness. That an American city should not be outdone by foreign cities in availing itself of this source of contentment seems beyond question. As President Eliot puts it: "The final aim of government by the people for the people is to increase the satisfaction and the joys of life to the highest possible degree for the greatest number of persons—to increase, that is, the number, variety and intensity of those sensations and emotions which give innocent and frequently recurring pleasure." And that is precisely the kind of pleasure given by trees, a pleasure





Elms, North Fifth Street

“innocent and frequently recurring.” To pass even one noble tree every day in going from the home to the workshop makes an appreciable addition to the satisfactions of the citizen.

The catalogue of the tree's utilities may easily be enlarged. Mr. W. A. Murrill, in **Health** Bulletin 205 issued by Cornell University, contends that “trees add to the healthfulness of a city by cooling and purifying the air. Besides cutting off the direct and reflected rays of the sun, foliage, by evaporating large quantities of water from its surface, exercises a marked effect on the temperature; and the reduction of the temperature in this way is greatest on dry, hot days when such reduction is most needed. Leaves also absorb impure and hurtful gases and manufacture the oxygen needed by us humans for respiration. Circulation of the air, due to unequal temperature, is likewise promoted by trees properly pruned and arranged; while the air of basements and cellars is rendered less humid by the removal of surplus water from the surrounding soil through the medium of roots and foliage.”

This appraisal of the tree as a sanitary factor is confirmed by the resolution of the New York County Medical Society, quoted by C. Mulford Robinson in “The Improvement of Cities and Towns.” The resolution follows:—“Resolved, That one of the most effective means for mitigating the intense heat of the Summer months and diminishing the death rate among children is the cultivation of an adequate number of trees in the streets.” The sanitary value of the tree is illustrated further by the fact that the bill which was presented to the Legislature in 1899, to give the care of the street trees of New York City to the Park Commission, was drawn by a physician, a member of the State Board of Health, and was introduced as a purely sanitary measure.

Trees  
Diminish  
Death Rate



Red and Sugar M

Trees  
Vitalize  
the Air

The air we breathe contains oxygen, carbonic acid gas, and ozone. The supply of oxygen is demonstrably generated by the plant life of the globe. The carbonic acid gas, hurtful to animal and helpful to vegetable life, is absorbed by the plants, and the proper atmospheric balance thus maintained. The large percentage of ozone in forest air, and the scarcity of it in the treeless streets where crowded dwellings abound, demonstrates that this tonic and recuperative element of the air is due to the presence of trees and the lack of it to their absence. The air in the vicinity of





Montclair Avenue

trees contains less bacteria and dust-particles than does the air outside of tree influence, which again demonstrates that the presence of trees decreases the total of atmospheric impurities. It is pertinent to note here that a local varnish manufacturer depends upon his row of well-kept trees to screen much of the dust from the air before it enters his windows to injure his product.

Streets well planted with trees invite out of door life by day and night, and the out-door life thus induced in no small degree thwarts the grim spectre of tuberculosis, now so serious a menace to every individual in our cities.

Trees  
and Life  
Outdoors

**Realty  
Values**Trees  
Appreciate  
Property

Trees are among the first things which impress a stranger in forming judgment as to whether a city is, or is not, a good place to live in. One need not be a lover of nature to appreciate the realty value of the refreshing shade of a row of street trees when the sun is blazing. What relief, what rest to weary eyes is the verdure of trees after the glaring pavements and shining windows of a bare street—and how desirable then becomes a residence on the verdure covered street. These are evident truths, and that realty values appreciate in consequence is equally apparent.

Courts  
Affirm  
This

The courts recognize trees as an asset to the property on, or in front of which they stand. This real estate value of trees has been confirmed by numerous court decisions. In many cases the courts have decided that the destruction of a street shade tree detracted from the value of the abutter's property to the amount of \$50, \$300, \$400. In cases where several trees fronting the same property have been destroyed by illuminating gas, the courts have awarded \$150 to \$200 per tree to the abutter.

\$1,000  
for Four  
Trees

Prof. T. J. Burrill, of the University of Illinois, cites the following instance of the money value of trees:—"Two lots on the same street were offered for sale. These lots were essentially similar in all respects save that in one case there were four trees, about twenty-five years old. Two of these trees were in the street and two on the lot inside of the street. In the case of the other lot, the only trees (two of them) were on the street, and these were less than half the age of the others. The prices asked for the lots were respectively \$2,500 and \$1,500. A man wishing to build compared the two lots and decided in favor of the \$2,500 one, the lot namely with the four trees—\$1,000 for four trees, or we might say for two trees. This lot had sixty-six



Black Walnut, Broad Street

feet frontage and contained about one-fourth of an acre. On such an acreage the net profit for twenty-five annual crops of corn might perhaps have been \$25. And each crop

would have received more care than did the four trees during the whole of the twenty-five years. \$1,000 to \$25—the contrast is instructive! Yet there are to-day persons of intelligence who, in looking forward to results, will prefer to trust the corn.”

Small  
Expense

It is a small task to plant a tree. The subsequent attention is not large. The trees once started help themselves as scarcely anything else of moment to us ever does. They grow while we sleep. They drink the sunshine and compound their own food out of the refuse gases of the air and the watery solution of the soil. Out of these inert, unattractive, barely recognized substances, by a miracle of transformation there comes forth that thing of life and beauty—which is also a thing of tangible money value—a tree.

“Sentiment is three-fourths of human life,”

**Patriotism** it has been said. A moment's reflection demonstrates the truth of the saying. Love of home, love of friends, love of country, love of liberty—sentiments like these are the great motive forces that move men to deeds of high achievement. And not the least among these forces is the sentiment of patriotism—the love of country. To what effect this sentiment has wrought in the hearts of men, let Concord and Lexington, Valley Forge and Monmouth, Trenton and Gettysburg and Appomattox bear witness. To what it can achieve in terms of dollars and cents, let the incalculable material wealth of this great nation, offspring of patriotism, give testimony.

Now patriotism—love of country—is but love of home writ large. Whatever fosters love of home fosters patriotism. The home in and about which beauty dwells—material beauty, moral beauty—is the home that wins and holds the heart. That, therefore, which beautifies the home—whether the home *stead*, the home city, the home state or the home





White Oak, Mt. Prospect Avenue

nation—becomes the nurse and hand-maiden of patriotism. Now trees beautify. The boy brought up in a country homestead, overhung by stately elms, approached through an avenue of maples or lindens, and having a dooryard hedged about with lilacs, carries with him while he lives and where'er he wanders the picture of that beauty and the love of that home. How the old homestead abides in the heart! How for love of it will not a man give all that he hath, even his life!

And as with the homestead, so with the home city. Trees beautify the city. That which beautifies the city of our



Maples, Eleventh Street and Gould Avenue  
looking South on Eleventh Street

homes endears that city to us, enlarges and deepens our love for it—deepens and enlarges, that is to say, civic patriotism. The century old oaks and maples of Oxford, no less than its graceful towers and scholastic memories, gave the old City of Schools its grip on the love of Cecil Rhodes. The towering elms of New Haven and Cambridge hold for aye the hearts of the Men of Yale and of Harvard. The catalpas and maples of Princeton have had their part in inspiring the Sons of Nassau to cheer with such vigor, to battle with such might, to remember with such love, to ENDOW with such loyalty and liberality.

These feelings of pride in and tender affection for one's city, born of long association with and interest in the community, and fostered by the beauty of the city's thoroughfares and buildings, are valuable assets. The wise city will seek to inculcate and conserve such sentiments. If from no other motive than municipal self-interest, civic patriotism should be cultivated. They who will do most for their city in even material things are they who love their city most. Our parks, our libraries, our schools, our churches, our hospitals, our orphanages, our hoped for wharf fronts—in a word, all public benefactions will be brought in directly or indirectly by men who *love* their city. As a mere material investment, then, if for no higher reason, make Newark beautiful with noble buildings and splendid parks and thoroughfares awave with trees. So shall the citizens love her the more, so shall they do exploits in her service.

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In view of the foregoing, it is evident that an enlightened interest in the promotion of the beauty, the health, the realty values of our city, commends to civic patriotism the maintenance, protection and increase of the trees of Newark.

Four Good  
Reasons  
for Trees



Lincoln Avenue